

SB0532_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
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TESTIMONY ON SB#/0532 – FAVORABLE
Commission to Advance Lithium–Ion Battery Safety in Maryland

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0532, Commission to Advance Lithium–Ion Battery Safety in Maryland

This bill is a critical step in creating protection for persons, especially our first responders, in dealing with any fires ignited by a lithium-ion battery in Maryland. The bill will create a commission that will gather data required to make recommendations for action by the Maryland General Assembly and the Governor to address lithium-ion battery safety.

In conversation with a captain in the fire department I have been informed of the extreme hazard of these batteries to our firefighters. Burning lithium-ion batteries create a toxic smoke containing sulfuric acid that can, on exposure, liquefy lung tissue when breathed. It is so dangerous that firefighters are now working to acquire and carry an antidote to it if symptoms of this damage are present in anyone, public or first responders, exposed to the toxic fumes.

In order to fix problems, we need to start with all possible data defining it and recommendations to remediate that problem. This is an urgent problem as more and more of these batteries are found in devices that permeate our society. This bill is Maryland's commitment to fix this danger to us all.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0532.